Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of the claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for preparing crosslinked polysaccharide microparticles, which comprise the following steps:

a) preparing a dilute solution containing a polysaccharide derivative having a crosslinkable functional group(s) in a range from 0.1 to 5%(w/v)~~,~~,

b) dispersing the solution by spraying to form microparticulate droplets; and

c) concentrating the solution contained in the droplets to facilitate crosslinking reaction of the polysaccharide derivative;

wherein the crosslinking reaction is a reaction in which crosslinkages are formed by addition reaction between a mercapto group and a unsaturated C-C bond.

2. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein the polysaccharide is hyaluronic acid.

3. (Canceled).

4. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the resulting microparticles have an average particle diameter of 0.01 μm to 150 μm.

5. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the resulting microparticle is a drug carrier.

6. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the resulting microparticle is a sustained-release drug carrier.

7. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the dilute solution before the crosslinking reaction contains a drug, and the drug is held in the microparticles obtained after the crosslinking reaction.

8. (Original) The method according to claim 7, wherein the crosslinking reaction does not cause drug denaturation even in the presence of the drug.

9. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 1, wherein the crosslinkable functional group is a mercapto

group, and the crosslinking reaction is a reaction in which crosslinkages are formed by disulfide formation.

10. (Canceled).

11. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 1, wherein the crosslinking reaction is a reaction in which crosslinkages are formed by reaction between a hydrazide group and an activated carboxylic acid ester.

12 - 19. (Canceled).

20. (Withdrawn) The microparticle according to claim 12, wherein the crosslinkable functional group is a mercapto group, and the crosslinking reaction is a reaction in which crosslinkages are formed by disulfide formation.

21. (Canceled).

22. (Withdrawn) The microparticle according to claim 12, wherein the crosslinking reaction is a reaction in which crosslinkages are formed by reaction between a hydrazide group and an activated carboxylic acid ester.

23. (New) The method according to claim 2, wherein the resulting microparticles have an average particle diameter of 0.01 μm to 150 μm.

24. (New) The method according to claim 23, wherein the resulting microparticle is a drug carrier.

25. (New) The method according to claim 24, wherein the resulting microparticle is a sustained-release drug carrier.

26. (New) The method according to claim 25, wherein the dilute solution before the crosslinking reaction contains a drug, and the drug is held in the microparticles obtained after the crosslinking reaction.

27. (New) The method according to claim 26, wherein the crosslinking reaction does not cause drug denaturation even in the presence of the drug.

28. (New) The method according to claim 3, wherein the resulting microparticles have an average particle diameter of 0.01 μm to 150 μm.

29. (New) The method according to claim 28, wherein the resulting microparticle is a drug carrier.

30. (New) The method according to claim 29, wherein the dilute solution before the crosslinking reaction contains a drug, and the drug is held in the microparticles obtained after the crosslinking reaction.